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to find between the output of a very dull and a highly prosperous year). "This was further augmented in 1917 [though by a narrow margin] and was pretty well maintained during 1918."

This point is not the only one in the book to which exception may be taken on statistical grounds, though the other points are less important. Even when we differ from Professor Friday, however, we remember with gratitude that he is writing the kind of economic theory that deals with facts, the kind that is definitely right or definitely wrong, the kind that is capable of cumulative development if the rest of us in criticising imitate his use of quantitative methods.

WESLEY C. MITCHELL.

New School for Social Research.

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*Trends of School Costs.* By W. Randolph Burgess. New York, Russell Sage Foundation, Department of Education. 1920. Pp. 139.

*Trends of School Costs* undertakes an analysis of the trends of teachers' salaries and school-building costs in the United States from 1841 to 1920. Other elements of expenditure for public schools are given little attention on the ground that the items are scattered, and constitute, when combined, only about one-fifth of total school costs. Index numbers for the full period from 1841 to 1920 are developed for the weekly salaries of men teachers and women teachers, both in city and in country schools. An index number for building costs is obtained for the period 1913 to 1919. Teachers' salaries are compared with the cost of living and with the wages of laborers and artisans, and trends are computed for all the more important series. The conclusion is reached that the school budget of 1915 must be doubled in 1920 if pre-war standards of public school education are to be maintained.

The conclusion that school budgets must be greatly increased leads Mr. Burgess, in the final chapter, to consider possible sources of income for the support of public education. He points out that nearly four-fifths of current school revenues are derived from local taxation, and that two-thirds of local revenues are obtained from the general property tax. To meet the doubled school budgets now required, municipalities must do more than reapportion their current expenditures. Large additional revenues must be raised. Mr. Burgess expects such revenues to be obtained principally from increased taxes upon real estate. "The real estate tax is a sound method of taxation, and, in spite of large increases in the tax rate of recent years, there are no indications that the rate which real property can bear has been reached."

In arriving at this conclusion, Mr. Burgess is traveling from the problems of education far afield into difficult questions of public finance. Possibly his conclusions regarding prospective sources of enlarged city revenue are consequently not to be taken too seriously. Certainly there can be no adequate discussion of municipal resources without a careful examination of the possibilities of increased local revenues from new forms of business taxation. Furthermore, there are important possibilities in extensions of the principle of grants to towns and cities from state authorities. It will be surprising if the next few years fail to show an increasing tendency toward centralization of school administration, with an accompanying resort to partial state collection of funds and subsequent grants to local treasuries from state authorities. In view of these possibilities, it has hardly yet been demonstrated that city schools must be financed as largely as in the past from the proceeds of the general property tax.

In his analysis of the elements of school expenditure, Mr. Burgess is upon more solid ground. The first chapter of his book deals with the mounting costs of education

in this country. It is pointed out that the amount now spent for public schools is nearly twelve times that spent in 1870, though the number of school children is only four times as great. Furthermore, it is observed that school costs are rising with a constantly increasing increment, the rate of increase in expenditures being slightly in excess of five per cent per annum.

The course of rising school costs is studied in the trend of teachers' salaries and building costs. The method of determining these trends is to be carefully noted. In practically all cases, Mr. Burgess accepts as the trend the line of regression obtained by correlating the variable with time, and in most cases the period of fit is the 75-year span from 1841 to 1915 \*

Examination of the various trends obtained in this fashion raises a serious question of method. Nearly all of the series included in the study are series of money items: total school expenditures, weekly salaries of teachers, the cost of living, artisans' wages, the cost of building materials. All of these series are materially affected by changes in the general level of prices. As a consequence, the several series reflect unmistakably the price episodes which have marked the economic and financial history of the country since 1841. The period from 1841 to 1861 is altogether different from the period of paper money inaugurated with the first issue of greenbacks in 1862. The rapidly rising prices of the greenback period bring experiences quite unlike those of the years of declining prices from 1873 to 1896. Later, the rapidly rising prices of the period from 1897 to 1913 have far-reaching consequences which are magnified many-fold during the price revolution since 1914. Teachers' salaries and building costs, like all other pecuniary phenomena, have been fundamentally influenced by general price movements. The relations between teachers' salaries and the cost of living, between teachers' salaries and wages of laborers and artisans, are quite different in periods of rising and of falling prices. To undertake an analysis of the trend from 1841 to 1920, without explicit and careful consideration of the several distinct chapters of monetary experience included within these seventy-five years, seems to attempt broad generalization at the expense of accurate diagnosis. The study of trends would be much more valuable if it carefully recognized the differences of trend in the successive periods of general price history.

The many direct comparisons of the several series presented in the book are much more instructive. The differences between teachers' salaries in city and country are striking. The relation between teachers' salaries and the wages of laborers and artisans is highly significant. The comparative course of teachers' salaries and the cost of living discloses the basic fact that teachers' salaries have gained on the cost of living during periods of declining prices and have ordinarily lost ground during periods of rising prices. Comparison of teachers' salaries with the cost of living as well as with wages of laborers and artisans suggests essential relationships between the underlying tendencies of the price level and the *real* compensation of government employees. The subject will repay further investigation. Burgess' analysis makes an excellent beginning for those government employees engaged in the important work of public education.

*Trends of School Costs* contains a substantial body of interesting and valuable information. The index numbers for teachers' salaries are an excellent compilation, and the study of building costs throws strong light upon an important subject. Although further details regarding the original data and the methods by which they

\* In computing the coefficients of regression and correlation, Ayres' shorter method is employed. See *Journal of Educational Research*, April and May, 1920. Where the trend of the series is curvilinear, no real fit is attempted; but the difference between the first and the last items is assumed to have accumulated geometrically and a compound interest curve is drawn between the two.

have been combined would seem desirable in some instances, there is no reason for questioning seriously any of the important series developed in the analysis. In general, the book seems more serviceable in particular parts than as a whole. Despite its title, it seems least valuable in its study of "trends." For the greater part, the trends are unconvincing because determined without regard to fundamental changes in the level of prices. Upon the other hand, the direct comparisons of the several series are most instructive and make the book a valuable contribution to the understanding of public school administration.

EDMUND E. DAY.

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*Eighty-First Annual Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England and Wales, 1918.* Cmd. 608, London, 1920. Pp. 450.

The Registrar General's reports of births, deaths, and marriages for England and Wales set a standard that other countries might well follow, and the 1918 report is up to the usual high mark. This volume contains the usual tables, among which are tabulations of births, deaths, and marriages under various classifications and in addition, tables giving the estimated populations for different classes of people in the country, the balance of inward and outward passenger movement, and meteorological data. These last three tables are not so common as they should be in reports on vital statistics.

The part of the volume devoted to the discussion of special diseases has been increased by the addition of sections treating malaria, diphtheria, and croup, influenza, dysentery, tubercle of the peritoneum and intestines, encephalitis and cerebro-spinal fever.

The effect of the influenza epidemic on the death-rate is discussed, and death-rates have been computed excluding the excess deaths due to influenza. The conclusion arrived at is that except for the epidemic the general health of the people was if anything better than that of previous years.

Among the special discussions of interest is one on the effect of the war on the marriage rates for different parts of England and Wales. While the marriage rate for the whole country for the year 1918 is slightly lower than the average prior to the war, the rate for rural and residential counties shows considerable increase, due probably to the shifting of the population caused by the war.

The increase of male births over female births since the beginning of the war is shown in the following table which gives the number of male births per 1,000 female births for each quarter of the years 1914 to 1918.

	First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter
1914.....	1,031	1,037	1,031	1,043
1915.....	1,031	1,042	1,044	1,043
1916.....	1,050	1,051	1,045	1,050
1917.....	1,042	1,042	1,043	1,049
1918.....	1,043	1,046	1,048	1,056

This table, taken with the fact that prior to the war the highest ratio was that of the year 1875 when the ratio was 1,043 male births to 1,000 female, shows that there has been a striking increase in masculinity among the births since the beginning of the war. The possibility that this may be due to the marked increase in marriages immediately following the beginning of the war is discussed and rejected.